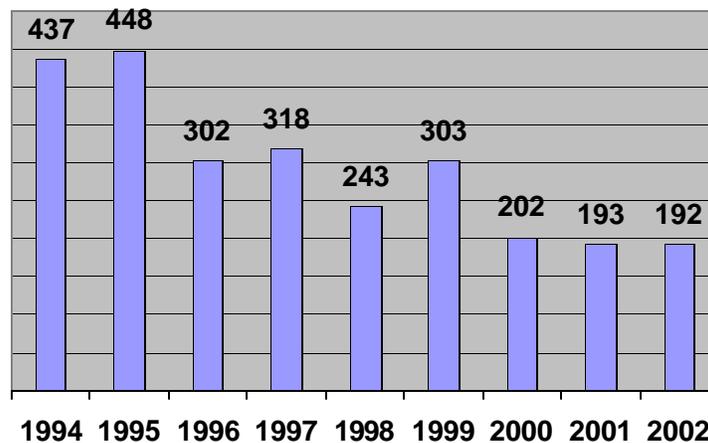


This past year the City Council and Animal Services have worked together to target irresponsible pet owners who create unsafe conditions in our community. A revision of the Animal Regulations Ordinance has increased penalties and enforcement control for those owners who allow their dogs to threaten the public's safety and create a public nuisance.

In Moreno Valley the incidents of reported bites have significantly dropped over the past ten years. We attribute this reduction to the ongoing development of a pro-active enforcement program and a revision in the Animal Regulations Ordinance that occurred in 1997. The most recent changes will further increase the level of safety and protection from dangerous and nuisance dogs in Moreno Valley.

### Reported Dog Bites



### Avoid being bitten

There are steps individuals can take to protect themselves against being bit by a dog.

- Never approach a dog you don't know or a dog that is alone without its owner, especially if the dog is behind a fence, tied with a rope or chain, or in a parked car.
- Never approach a dog that is eating, sleeping, or guarding something. Dogs naturally guard their babies, food, bones, and toys.
- Never chase or tease dogs. Don't poke, hit, pull, or pinch a dog.
- Never approach a dog (or any animal) that is injured.
- Always ask the owner's permission before petting a dog.
- NEVER leave a baby or small child alone with a dog.
- When approached by a strange dog:
  - Do not run away. Dogs have a natural instinct to chase and catch things.
  - Do not make eye contact with the dog.

- Stand very still like a statue with your arms at your sides, or back away slowly and quietly.
  - In a loud, commanding voice, tell the dog to "go away."
- If you are attacked, give the dog an object, such as a jacket or backpack to bite or chew on.
- If you fall or are knocked to the ground:
  - Curl into a ball.
  - Protect your face by covering your head and neck.
  - Put your hands over your ears.

## Prevent dog attacks: What can pet owners do?

- Choose your dog carefully. Select a breed or type of dog that is appropriate for your family and home.
- Socialize your dog. Be sure your dog interacts with all members of the family, as well as people outside the family and with other animals.
- License your dog, obey leash laws, and take care to properly fence yards. Dogs that are allowed to roam loose outside the yard expand their "territory," and will often defend it aggressively.
- Neuter your dog. Neutering reduces aggression, especially in males. Un-neutered dogs are more than 2.6 times more likely to bite than neutered dogs.
- Train your dog. Basic obedience training is as important for the owner as it is for the dog.
- Maintain your dog's health. Not only is it the right thing for the dog, but it also reduces bite responses caused by pain or irritability.
- Be sure your dog is vaccinated for rabies and other diseases.
- Provide your dog with adequate food, shelter, exercise, and affection. Tethering or chaining dogs makes them feel vulnerable and increases their aggression.
- Don't play aggressive games with your dog.

## Resources for additional information

[American Veterinary Medical Association](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[National Center for Injury Prevention and Control](#)

*©2002 American Humane. This Fact Sheet may be reproduced and distributed without permission; however, appropriate citation must be given to American Humane.*